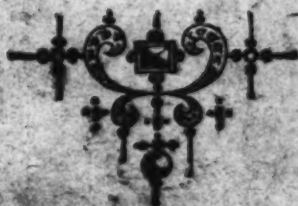


D. O. M. S.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
**SIR THOMAS
MOORE**

Lord high Chancellour of
England.

WRITTEN BY
*M. T. M. and dedicated to the Queens
most gracious Maestie.*



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N



TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTIE PRINCESSE,
OVR MOST GRATIOVS QVEENE
AND SOVERAIGNE

MARIE HENRIETTE.

QVEENE OF GREAT BRITAINE,

FRANCE, AND IRLAND,

LADIE OF THE ILES OF THE

British Ocean.



OOST GRATIOVS
AND SOVERAIGNE
LADIE.

The authour of
this Treatise, eldest
sonne by descent, & heire by na-
ture of the family of that vvorthy
Martyr, vvwhose life is described in



EPISTLE DEDICATORY

it: had he liued himselfe to haue set it forth to the viewv of Christianies, vvould not haue thought vpon any other patron and protectour to dedicate it vnto, then your most excellēt Maiestie. For he vvvas most constantly affected alvvayes to the French Nation and crowne, next after the dutifull obedience vvwhich he ought to his ovvne natural Lord and soueraigne. And this his affection did he manifest in all occasions, but especiallie in the treatie of the happie mariage of your highnes, vvith the King our soueraigne Lord and maister; Assembling

at his owne costes and charges,
 vyth vnyuearied industrie all
 the English persons of note and
 esteeme, that then were in and
 about Rome, & vyth the all, (as
 the mouth of the all) supplicating
 to his Holines for the dispatch of
 this most hope-full and happie
 contract, yeelding such reasons for
 the effecting thereof, as highlie
 pleased the chiefe Pastour of the
 Church vnder Christ our Sau-
 our. The same affection did he re-
 stifie sufficiently in the last period
 of his life, leauing his bodie to be
 buried in the French church at



Rome vvhere vvith great contē
of the French Nobilitie it lieth
interred.

This being the affection of the
author of this treatise I should
much vvronge his memorie, if
these labours of his should be of-
fred to the patronage of anie other
then of your roiall Maiestie. The
glorious Martyr himselfe, demāds
likevvise, that his life should be
read vnder your Maiesties prote-
ction: since he lost his life in this
vvorld (to gaine it in the next) in
defence of an innocent stranger
Queene (for reasons not to be
mētioned by vs) debarred from

her lavvfull bed. Although
(God be praised and magnified
therefore) the heauens haue
rained such graces vpon your
Maiestie, that there neuer
can happen any such causes of
defence; your glorious Hus-
band and Lord, our soueraigne
King so dearlie affecting you,
and the hope-full yssue (the
chiefest bond of matrimonial
loue) so povverfully knitting
your hearts together, and your
gratious Maiesties goodnes,
virtues, and debonnaire discre-
tion so recommending you to
him first, and then to all his true

EPIST. DEDICAT. TO THE Q. MAIESTY.

loyall subiects of this great vni-
ted Monarchie; That vve may
vndoubtedlie expect from al-
mightie God a long and pro-
perous enioyāce of your joint-
gouernment, and a glorious race
of happie successours to this
crovvne frō your royall loines;
vvhich happines, and heauen
after long prosperitie on earth,
vpon my knees I vvish vnto
your royall grace; remaining
for euer,

*Your Maiesties loyall and obedient
subiect & seruant.*

M. C. M. E.



The Preface to the Reader.



I. **A**S I cannot but daily thinke The end
and scope
of this
work:
of the rare and admirable ver-
tues both of nature and grace,
which did shine most perspi-
cuously in the blessed life and
glorious death of that worthie
Champion of Christs Church

S^r. THOMAS MORE; so also haue I often had an ear-
nest desire, especially for the spirituall behoofe of
my selfe and my Children (who are as small
brookes deriued by naturall propagation frō that
spacious sea of rare perfections; or like tender
twigs drawing sappe from the fruitfull roote of
his noble excellēcies) to giue them a taste, accor-
ding to my poore abilitie, of some few of his most
heroical vertues; professing my self vtterly vnable
to sett downe his life in writing, as he deserueth.

A

2. For

The Preface to the Reader.

Though
beyond
my abili-
ty and
capacity.

2. For if that *Apelles* the principall paynter that euer liued, was thought only fitt to drawe with his pencell the pourtraicture of *Alexander the Great*; or if *Lyfippus* the most curious engrauer was the onlie man, which was suffered to carue in brasse the beauteous feature of the same so worthie a personage; for feare leaſt that ſome vnſkillfull workeman might rather blemish his fauour, then anie waies grace it: what courage can I haue to vndertake a worke of ſo great difficultie as this, who know my ſelfe a verie puney in comparison of ſo manie famous men, that haue vndergone this buſineſſe alreadie, finding in the verie beginning of this mine enterpriſe my ſmall capacity ouerwhelmed with the plentie and copiouſneſſe of this ſubiect? and yf I ſhould boaste my witt and ſkill to be equall with learned *Stapleton's*, who at large and with great diligence and dexteritie hath ſett forth the life of this great ſeruant of God in his booke intituled *The three Thomases*, I ſhould, vaniſh away in mine owne pride, knowing my ſelf right well moſt vnworthie to be compared vnto him; or if I ſhould challenge vnto

The Preface to the Reader.

3

ge vnto my selfe more certaintie of the matter related, then my great vncle *Mr. William Roo- per* could haue, euerie one might iudge me both vaine and arrogant, of whose sinceritie none that euer knewe him or heard of him, can doubt, I being the third in descent from *S. THOMAS*, and he his owne sonne-in law, with whome he had familiarly conuersed y space of sixteene yeares togeather, as he himself confesseth; yet for all this I haue now at last ventured to discourse a little of the life and death of this glorious Martyr (for so without enuie I hope I may call him) *non ut electus ex multis, sed quasi relictus ex omnibus*, not as one that may be thought fitt to sett his life forth with good grace, but as he, who only vpon a naturall affection to his Ancestour, trusting chiefly of Gods ayde, and this Saint's sholie praiers, is emboldened to say somewhat thereof; this being one propertie of affection, to suppose, that whosoever hath spoken, or whatsoever hath bene sayd of him, whome we loue, all that we thinke nothing, if we ourselues haue not sayd

Yet vnder-
taken
out of
zeale and
loue to
the me-
mory of
S. Th. M.

4 *The Preface to the Reader.*

somewhat in his praise; although (alas) we are often the vnfittest men for that purpose, we being not able to vtter what we conceaue, because our passion taketh away much of our conceipt; and therefore we vtter for the most parte either broken words, or vnperfect sentences, more intelligible to him, that searcheth the secretts of mens harts, then to others that heare them spoken, or reade them in our writings.

And for
speciall
cause
known
to my
self alone.

3. But one may aske me, why I should challenge more affection to this man, then anie other of my kinne, of whome few or none haue endeauoured to write any thing hitherto; I answer, that though I haue had more cause perhaps then anie man else, to loue him, and honour him, which is best known to my selfe, and not fitt to be related vnto all men, *secretum meum mihi*; yet will I not ascribe to my selfe so great a priuiledge of louing him best, I being the yongest and meanest of all my familie; lett this suffice him, that is a curious searcher of this my deede, that as Doctour Staple-
ton

The Preface to the Reader.

ton was moued to take paines in setting forth the actions of S. THOMAS MORE, because he was borne in the verie same moneth and yeare, wherein he suffered his glorious martyrdom; so was I borne anew and regenerated by the holie Sacrament of Baptisme on the verie same day (though manie yeares after) on which Sr. THOMAS MORE entred heauen triumphant, to witt, on the sixt day of Iuly. And therefore haue I had some speciall confidence of his particular furtherance and blessing. For how, I pray you, could I euer haue hoped to haue liued as heyre of Sr. THOMAS his familie, and to enioye at this time some parte of his inheritance, all which by his attaynder he had lost vtterly from himself and his children, if his praiers had not, as it were begged it at Gods hands? besides I was the yongest of thirteene children of my father, the last & meanest of fise sonnes, foure of which liued to mens estate; and yet it hath bene Gods holie pleasure, to bestowe this inheritance vpon me; which though perhaps I haue no cause to boaste of, because it may be a

As also
for being
borne on
the day of
his mar-
tyrdom;

And by
his pray-
ers ha-
uing the
honour
to be the
heyre of
his fami-
ly.

punishment vnto me for my faultes, if I vse it not well, and a burden, which may weighe me downe full deepe; yet will the world coniecture it to be a great blessing of God, and so I ought to acknowledge it: And although I knowe myself the vnfittest and vnworthiest of all the foure to manage this estate, yet they either loathed the world, before the world fawned on thē, liuing in voluntarie contempt thereof, and dyed happie soules, in that they chose to be accounted abiect in the sight of mē; or else they vtterly cast of all care of earthlie trash, by professing a strayte and religious life, for feare least the dangerous perills of worldlie wealth might gaule their soules, and the number of snares, which hang in euerie corner of this world, might entrappe thē to the endangering of their eternall saluation; and left me poore soule to sinke or swimme, or, as I can, wade out of these dangerous whirle pooles, amongsts which we wordlings are ingulphed; the multitude of which eminent perils doe force me to cry first and chiefly to CHRIST IESVS: saying with his Apostles: *Lord,*
saue

The Preface to the Reader. 7

saue me, for I am in danger of drowning; and then also to craue the especiall assistance of Sr. THOMAS MORE his prayers, by whose intercession I hope to waite this my poore barke vnto her assured haue of heauen, though shaken and crushed with winde and weather.

4. But none of vs must thinke, that his assistance is all, we must putt our owne helping hands thereto: Not presuming only vpon his merits:

*Nā genus & proanos, & quæ non fecimus ipsi
Vix ea nostra uoco. —*

his meritts are not our warrant, yea rather his exāples haue layde a greater load on the backes of his posteritie, in that we are bound to imitate his actions more then anie other, or else more harme will fall vpon vs, because we haue not followed the foote steps of our wor-
thie Forefather, according as *Moyes* commanded the *Israēlites* saying in his Canticke: *Interroga patrem tuum, & annuntiabit tibi; maiores tuos, & dicent tibi;* which the Apostle also counselleth Christians in these wordes: *Quorum uidentes conuersationem, imitami fidem.* But
should

VVhich lay a greater burden of imitation vpon vs,

8 *The Preface to the Reader.*

should I therefore wish I had not bene his Grandchilde, because I haue incurred a greater bond, and shall runne into greater infamie, by forsaking my dutie? noe; God forbidde; yea rather this will I boldly affirme, not vpon vaine glorie, but vpon the confidence I haue of this singular man's blessing; if God would haue giuen me choice, before he created me of nothing, wether I would be the sonne of some famous Emperour, magnificent King, noble Duke, couragious Lord, or his, whose I was, I would most willingly haue chosen to be the same I am (to Gods eternall glorie be it spoken.)

But tru-
ling vpon
his pray-
ers: and
setting
his life &
death as
a sampler
before
our eyes.

5. Wherefore relying vpon the assistance of this most excellent Saint, I will endeavour briefly to sett downe for mine owne instructiō, and my Childrens, the life & death of S^r. THOMAS MORE; who was as a bright starre of our Countrie in the tempestuous stormes of persecution, in which we sayle to our heauenlie Citie; on whome God heaped a number of most singular endowments; as, abundance of witt, profound wisdom, happie discretion, perfect Iustice,

The Preface to the Reader. 9

Iustice, exceeding temperance, sweete affabilitie, and all excellencies of nature and moralitie, besides supernaturall and Theologicall gifts; as, Charitie in a high degree, both towards God and his neighbour, a Fayth most constant, which would not be daunted with anie threatnes or disgraces, that his Prince or Counsellours could thinder out against him, nay not with death it selfe; a magnanimitie not to be overcome either by feare of anie losses, or hope of anie dignities; religion and such deuotion as scarcely could be looked for in anie of a lay profession; which perfections beganne to shine in his infancie, and continued in the progresse of his actions, and did not ende, but increased by his most glorious death which was an enterance into a most happie kingdome, wherein he both can and will haue compassion and helpe vs in these our miseries; because he was raysed by God to be one of the first famous warriours in this our long persecution. Wherefore he may worthily be sett before our eyes, as a perfect patterne and liuelie example

B

to be

10 *The Preface to the Reader.*

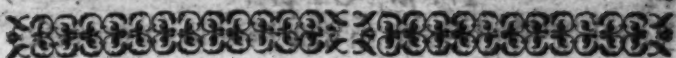
to be imitated by vs : for he had more to loose, then most men in the land , being second to none but to the Chiefest, either in worldlie dignitie, or his Prince's fauour; and yet did he willingly forgoe all, yea life it selfe, rather then to wrong his Conscience, in consenting to anie thing against the law of God, and Iustice, as by this ensuing discourse will particularly appeare.

THE










THE FIRST CHAPTER.

SIR THOMAS MORES

parentage, birth, education; studies and first employments of youth.

1. *Sir Tho. Mores parents, and their noble descent.*
2. *The place, day, and yeare of Sir Th. Mor. birth.*
3. *Sir T. M. his first studies.*
4. *Sir T. M. his first workes or writings.*
5. *His mortifications and penances.*
6. *His deuotions, and prayers.*
7. *His diet and apparel.*
8. *His pleasaunt and discreet dissimulation of his virtues.*

1.  IR THOMAS MORE was the onlie S. Thom. Moeres sonne of *Sir Iohn More* knight, parentage and nobility. one of the Iustices of the kings

Bench



S. Iohn
Moor
Knight,
father of
Sir Tho-
mas; and
his vir-
tues.

Bench a singular man for manie rare perfe-
ctions, which his sonne setteth downe in
his owne Epitaph extant amongst his La-
tine Workes, tearming his father a man
Civile, that is to say, Courteous and af-
fable to all men; *sweete and pleasant in Con-
versation*, that is, full of merrie conceits
and witticastes; *innocent and harmelesse*, to
witt, neither desirous of reuēge, nor maligning
anie for his owne priuate gaine; *meeke and
gentle*, that is to say, of an humble carriage in
his office and dignitie; *merciesfull and pittiesfull*,
that is, bountiesfull to the poore, and full of cō-
passion towards all distressed persons; *iust and
uncorrupted*, which are the aptest titles and epi-
thites that can be giuen to a Iudge, as if he
would say, that he was neuer moued with friend-
shipp, stirred vp with hope of gaine, nor wres-
ted by anie threates, but still performed h's du-
tie, and that he shutt vp alwaies his left eie to all
affection of friendshipp, and from all briberie.
Camden also reporteth of him for prooffe of
his pleasantnesse of witt, that he would compa-
re the

The first Chapter.

13

re the multitude of women, which are to be chosen for wiues, vnto a bagge full of snakes, hauing amongst them but one eeles; now if a man should putt his hand into this bagg, he may chance to light on the eeles, but it is a hundred to one he shall be stung with a snake. Manie such like wittie similitudes would he vse in his priuate discourses, and in publike auditorie.

By these his perfections of witt and grace Descended of ancient gentry. one might guesse that this Childe was likelic to proue singular, hauing so good a father; but he farre surpassed him in all these and manie more excellencies; so that our Familie hath bene much more dignified by this sonne, then he anie way drew worth and dignitie from his Ancestours; the consideration whereof hath caused manie to thinke and say that SIR THOMAS was of meane parentage, and the first of his house; yea some haue not sticke to write, by birth no gentleman; grounding their errour vpon these wordes, which he setteth downe in his Epitaphe: *Thomas More, borne of no noble*

B 3

fami-

familie, but of an honest stock; which is true as we here in England take Nobilitie and Noble; For none vnder a Baron (except he be of the Priue Councell) doth challenge it; and in this sence he meaneth it: but as the Latine word *Nobilis* is taken in other Countries for Gentrie, it was otherwise. For Iudge *More* bare Armes from his birth, hauing his Coate quartered, which doth argue that he came to his inheritannce by descent, and therefore although by reason of king Henries seisure of all our Euidences we cannot certainly tell, who were *Sir Iohn's* Ancestours, yet must they needes be Gentlemen; and, as I haue heard, they either came out of the *Mores* of Ireland, or they of Ireland came out of vs. And as for *SIR THOMAS*, he was, as I haue sayd, a Knight's eldest sonne, and sole heyre to a Iudge of this realme. But whatsoeuer the Familie was or is, if Vertue can ennoble anie, surely it hath by these two excellent men bene made much more to be respected. yet if we, as God forbidde we should, degenerate from their footestepps, we may cause it soone to be base & of small

of small reckoning, vice being the chiefe stay-
ne, that tainteth euen the noblest Families.

The name of SIR THOMAS his mother was *Sir Tho.
Moeres* Handcombe of Holierwell in the Countie of *mother, a
very vir-
tuous
gentle
woman.* Bedford; yet Doctour Stapleton had not heard
so much, whosayth: that her name was vn-
knowne; by reason of which wordes some ha-
ue taken greate exceptions, as though she had
bene a base woman, though he doth in the same
place tell this reason thereof, because she dyed
soone after she had brought forth this childe;
but to haue bene a woman of more then ordi-
narie vertue, that, which Doctor Clement re-
porteth from SIR THOMAS his owne mouth of
a vision which she had the next night after her *Her visio
concer-
ning her
children,
and espe-
cially Sir
Thomas.*
marriage, seemeth, in my iudgement, forcible
to argue; in which she sawe in her sleepe, as it
were ingrauen in her wedding ring the number
and fauour of all her children she was to haue,
whereof the face of one was so darke and ob-
scure that she could not well discerne it, and in-
deede afterwards she suffered of one of her
children an vntimely deliuerie; but the face of
one

one of her other, she beheld shining most gloriously, whereby no doubt Sir THOMAS his fame and sanctitie was foreshened and presignified. She brought forth before him to *Sir Iohn* two daughters, one called *Iane*, afterwards married to a noble gentleman *Mr. Richard Staffretō*, & *Elizabeth*, wife to the worthie gentleman *Mr. Iohn Rastall*, Iudge *Rastall's* father.

Sir Iohn
Moore
his second
wife, out-
liued Sir
Thomas.

Sir Iohn after his first wife's death, married successiuelly two others, whereof the last, as I haue heard, was called *Alice* one of the *Mores* of Surrey, and great aunte to *Sir William More*, whose sonne, now liuing, is *Sir George*, lieftenant of the Tower, a man little inferiour to his noble Ancestours, if his religion were answerable to theirs. This Ladie outliued her sonne in law Sir THOMAS, dwelling vpon her Ioin-ture in Hartfordshire at a Capitall messuage then called *More-place*, now *Gubbons*, in the parish of *Northmimes*; but being a little before her death thrust out of all by king Henry's furie, she dyed at Northall a mile from thence, and lieth buried in the church there.

Sir

2. Sir THOMAS MORE was borne at London in Milke-streete, (where the Iudge his father for the most parte dwelt) in the yeare of our Lord 1480. in the twentieth yeare of Edward the Fourth. Shortly after his birth God would shew by another signe, how deare this babe was vnto him. For his nurse chancing to ride with him ouer a water, and her horse stepping aside into a deepe place, putt both her and her Childe in great danger and ieopardie; whose harmes she seeking suddenly to preuent, threw the infant ouer a hedge into a fielde neere adioyning; and after by God's helpe escapingsafe also, when she came to take him vp againe, she found him to haue no hurt at all, but sweetely smiled vpon her; that it might well be sayd of him: *Angelus suis Deus mandauit de te, ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum*; and not his foote only, but his whole bodie.

2.
The place and time of S. Th. More's birth.

An evidence dāger strangely escaped in his child hood.

3. This was no doubt a happie presage of his future holinesse; and putt his parents in minde that he was that shining Childe, of whom

3.
His first studies & employments.

The first Chapter.

In S. An-
thonies
schoole
in Lon-
don.

whome his mother had that former vision;
wherefore his father had the greater care to
bring him vp in learning, as soone as his tender
age would permit it; and so he put him to the
Free-schoole of London called *S. Anthonies*,
where he had a famous and learned man called
Nicolas Holt for his maister, vnder whome
when he had rather greedily deuoured then lea-
surely chewed his Grammar rules, he outstrip-
ped farre both in towardnesse of witt, and dili-
gence of endeauours, all his schoole fellowes,
with whome he was matched.

In Car-
dinal
Mortons
house.

The prai-
se of the
L. Cardi-
nal.

And being borne to farre greater matters, his
father procured him to be placed shortly after
in the house of the most worthie prelate that
then liued in England both for wisedome, lear-
ning and vertue, whose like, the world scarcely
had, Cardinall *Morton* Archbishopp of Can-
terburie, and Lord high Chancellour of En-
gland, whose graue countenance and carriage
was such that he easily allured all men to ho-
nour and loue him; a man (as Sir THOMAS MO-
RE describeth him in his *Utopia*) of incompara-
ble iud.

ble iudgement, a memorie more then is credible, eloquent in speech, and, which is most to be wished in Clergiemen, of singular wisdom and vertue; so that the King and the Commonwealth relyed chiefly vpon this mans counsell, as he, by whose policie King *Henrie* the Seventh both gott the Crowne of England from *Richard* the third the vsurper, and also most happily procured the two houses of *Lancaster* and *Yorke* to be vnited by marriage.

In this famous mans house this youth learned most diligently aboundance of wisdom and vertue; and now he beganne to shew to the world, what man he was likelie to proue. For the Cardinall often would make triall of his pregnant witt, especially at Christmas merriments, when hauing plaies for recreation this youth would suddenly steppe vp amongst the players, and neuer studying before vpon the matter, make often a patte of his owne inuention, which was so wittie and so full of ieasts, that he alone made more sporte and laughter, then all the players besides; for which his towardlie-

S. Thom.
Moore
his tow.
edynes
in the
Cardi-
nals reti-
new.

ardliencesse the Cardinall delighted much in him, and would often say of him vnto diuerse of the Nobilitie, who at sundrie times dined with him, that that boy there wayting on him, whosoever should liue to see it, would proue a maruelous rare man.

The Cardinal sendeth him to Oxford.

But when this most reuerend Prelate sawe, that he could not profitt so much in his house, as he desired, where there were manie distractions of publike affaires, hauing great care of his bringing vp, he sent him to the Vniuersitie, and placed him in *Canterbury-Colledge* at *Oxford*, now called *Christs-church*; where, in two yeares space that he remained there, he profited exceedingly in *Rhetorick*, *Logick* and *Philosophie*; and shewed euidently, what wonders, witt and diligence can performe, when they are ioyned, as seldome they are, in one painefull student. There his whole minde was sett on his booke; for in his allowance his father kept him verie short, suffering him scarcely to haue so much monie in his owne custodie, as would pay for the mending of his apparrell; euen no
more

Brought vp there neerly & austerly by his father.

more then necessitie required; and of his expences he would exact of him a particular accounte, which course of his fathers he would often both speake of, and praise it, when he came to riper yeares; affirming that by this meanes he was curbed from all vice, and withdrawn from manie idle expences either of gaming or keeping naughtie companie, so that he knew neither play nor other riott, wherein most yong men in these our lamentable daies plunge themselues too timely, to the vtter overthrow as well of learning and future vertue, as their temporall estates. This strictnesse of his father increased in him also a great reuerence and obedience after vnto him againe; in so much that in all his life after he was so dutiefull vnto him, that he neuer offended nor contradicted him in anie the least worde or action, still shewing towards him admirable deedes of humilitie, euen at that time, when in the eye of the world, he farre surpassed his father in dignitie, which may be seene, by asking him blessing euerie day duly, euen after he was Lord Chancellor.

The great
reuerence
vvhich
he al-
ways be-
are to his
father.